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Title: Need to give concessions on fresh loans to the farmers who have repaid their loans in time.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (DINDIGUL): There has been a steep fall in the agricultural production for the last several years. The basic problem is that farming has become an unproductive proposition. Previous years statistics show that thousands of farmers are committing suicide. Successive Governments both at the Centre and the States have failed to address this fundamental problem with the result that after becoming self sufficient in food production we have reached a stage where under we have to import 20 lakhs tonnes of wheat last year to meet domestic demand. The situation would become bad to worse unless corrective measures are taken in time. The Government need to address the problem of stagnating agriculture sector.

I congratulate the Government for announcing the loan waiver scheme for small and marginal farmers. But this measure will alone not solve the problems of farmers. However the problem still continues and this problem will persist unless farming is made productive.

I would also refer to the problem of not giving incentive to the farmers who have already repaid the loans.

I would urge upon our Hon'ble Finance Minister to devise a scheme by which farmers who have repaid the loans and who come for fresh loans would be given additional quantum of credit and concession in interest rate as an incentive for their earlier prompt payments.

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* Treated as laid on the Table

This incentive will go a long way in ensuring that farmers who make prompt payment are not discriminated against.